

CODE FOR THE ROAD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IMPAIRED DRIVING PREVENTION IS THE FOCUS OF DECEMBER SUMMIT

BISMARCK, N.D. – Impaired driving is a problem in North Dakota. Over the past 10 years, the percent of alcohol-related fatal crashes has fluctuated from a high of 55.8 percent in 2007, to a low of 40.5 percent in 2009. In 2015, nearly 44 percent of motor vehicle fatalities in North Dakota were alcohol related.

At the national level, drunk driving is declining while drugged driving is on the rise. But, the impact of drugged driving as a factor in impaired driving in North Dakota is more difficult to define.

“There are issues in North Dakota that contribute to the problem of drugged driving including – an opioid use crisis; an aging prescription taking population; and the recent approval of marijuana for medical use,” said Karin Mongeon, NDDOT Safety Division Director.

To help address the issue, the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT), AAA-the Auto Club Group, The Auto Club Group Traffic Safety Foundation, the North Dakota Highway Patrol, the North Dakota Association of Counties and the North Dakota Department of Human Services are hosting a one-day **Drugged Driving Summit on December 1** in Bismarck.

The Summit will build statewide capacity to deter drugged driving in North Dakota with leading experts discussing national trends in the use of illegal and legal drugs and their impact on driving. North Dakota experts will address current efforts to identify and deter drug-impaired drivers, areas for improvement and potential challenges in the State.

The Summit will bring together subject matter experts including law enforcement, judges, attorneys, legislators, emergency medical services and trauma professionals, and other traffic safety partners with a goal to save lives from impaired driving on North Dakota roads.

“Impaired driving is 100 percent preventable. Many lives would be saved in North Dakota each year if every driver consistently makes the choice to drive sober and not while under the influence of alcohol or drugs,” Mongeon said.

The NDDOT grants funds for extra DUI enforcement as part of an overall effort to reduce deaths and injuries on North Dakota roads.

Learn more about these and other traffic safety initiatives at dot.nd.gov, ndcodefortheroad.org or join the conversation on the Code for the Road Facebook or Twitter page.

Families are invited to create memorials for those who have died in crashes in North Dakota at ndcodefortheroad.org/memorial.

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